



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION 8, MONTANA OFFICE
FEDERAL BUILDING, 10 W. 15th STREET, SUITE 3200
HELENA, MONTANA 59626

EXHIBIT 7
DATE 1/16/07
HB 2

Ref: 8MO

January 16, 2007

Representative Rick Ripley, Chairman
Joint Appropriations Subcommittee on Natural Resources
Montana 60th Legislature
Helena, MT

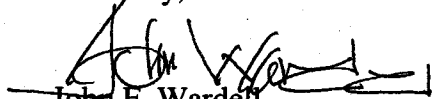
Dear Chairman Ripley:

I support the Department of Environmental Quality's request for additional enforcement staff. Montana has the greatest number of Public Water Supply Significant Non-Compliers of any state within EPA Region 8. EPA has recently shared enforcement activities with the Department, and during 2006 EPA issued 23 federal enforcement actions to Public Water Supplies in Montana.

Additional enforcement staff should help improve the compliance rate. Also, additional enforcement staff will be critical if the Department is to handle the current enforcement case load. Lastly, it will help provide more effective deterrence in the form of more timely enforcement, an area where much improvement is needed if Montana is to meet the terms of its enforcement agreement with EPA Region 8.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at 406-457-5001.

Sincerely,


John F. Wardell
Director

cc: Richard Opper, Director, MDEQ
John Arrigo, Administrator, MDEQ Enforcement Division



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